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SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6605

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 8697

E.O. 12065: GDS 11/13/87 (LANNON, GEORGE C.) OR-C
TAGS: CASC
SUBJECT: W/W JOHN J. SULLIVAN

REFS: (A) SAN SALVADOR 8567, (B) SAN SALVADOR 8615

Q. C - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. BACKGROUND: ON DECEMBER 28, 1980 JOHN J. SULLIVAN, REPORTER FOR HUSTLER MAGAZINE, DISAPPEARED FROM THE SHERATON HOTEL IN SAN SALVADOR. SINCE THEN, HE HAS NOT BEEN SEEN OR HEARD FROM. EMBASSY, AT SULLIVAN FAMILY'S REQUEST, HAS RUN AN ADVERTISEMENT IN A LOCAL PAPER OFFERING A REWARD FOR INFORMATION CONCERNING SULLIVAN'S WHEREABOUTS. NO USEFUL INFORMATION HAS BEEN FORTHCOMING UNTIL, 11/10/81 WHEN THE DEPARTMENT RECEIVED FROM THE WASHINGTON POST A COPY OF A LETTER DATED 9/25/81
FROM EL SALVADOR CONCERNING JOHN SULLIVAN. THE WRITER OF THE LETTER, AGENT MORAN OF THE HACIENDA POLICE, CLAIMS SULLIVAN WAS PICKED UP BY THE HACIENDA POLICE AND TAKEN TO POLICE BARRACKS FOR QUESTIONING. DURING INTERROGATION, SULLIVAN WAS TORTURED AND DIED.
THE BODY ACCORDING TO THE ALLEGED AGENT WAS SUBSEQUENTLY BURIED. THE ALLEGED AGEN CLAIMS HE CAN PROVIDE ALL DETAILS ABOUT SULLIVAN'S DEATH NA PLACE OF BURIAL. ON 11/9/81 A MAN CLAIMING TO BE THE WRITER OF THE LETTER TO THE WASHINGTON POST CALLED US AND AGREED TO PROVIDE INFORMATION IF WE COULD PROVIDE SECURITY. WE PROPOSED HE GO TO HONDURAS OR GUATEMALA WHERE HE WOULD BE SAFE AND PROVIDE DETAILS OF SULLIVAN'S DISAPPEARANCE TO THE AMERICAN CONSUL. CALLER SAID HE WOULD GO TO HONDURAS ON 11/16/81 AND VISIT AMERICAN CONSUL IN TEGUCIGALPA. CALLER WILL IDENTIFY HIMSELF BY THE NAME USED IN THE LETTER. AGENT MORAN. THIS WAS NOT IN THE ADVERTISEMENT NOR HAVE WE MENTIONED IT PUBLICALLY AND, IF USED, WILL INDICATE THAT THE PERSON IS IN FACT WRITER OF THE LETTER TO THE POST.

3. YOUR LINE OF QUESTIONING SHOULD INCLUDE DETAILS CONCERNING WHERE AND WHEN SULLIVAN WAS PICKED UP; WHERE HE WAS INTERROGATED; WHICH POLICE FORCE PICKED HIM UP; NAMES OF OTHER PEOPLE INVOLVED; HOW LONG WAS HE INTERROGATED; DATE SULLIVAN DIED; ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT IS LEARNING EXACTLY WHERE HE IS BURIED. ADDITIONALLY A DESCRIPTION OF SULLIVAN'S CAMERA AND RING WOULD BE HELPFUL.

4. FYI: SULLIVAN HAD A 35-MM PENTAX CAMERA, WHICH WAS RECOVERED IN HIS ROOM. YOU MAY NOTE THAT MORAN ALSO MENTIONS A CAMERA BEING WITH SULLIVAN. SINCE WE DOUBT HE HAD TWO CAMERA, THIS MAY BE AN OBVIOUS FLAW IN THE STORY. ALSO, SULLIVAN WORE A SOLID SILVER RING WITH A ROUND FACE IN THE DESIGN OF AN AZTEC CALENDAR.

5. THE REWARD OFFERED BY THE SULLIVAN FAMILY IS $5,000.

6. ASSISTANT SECRETARY DIEGO ASENCIO AND VARIOUS MEMBERS OF CONGRESS HAVE SHOWN PERSONAL INTEREST IN THIS CASE.

7. APPRECIATE YOUR ASSISTANCE. PLEASE ADVISE OF DEVELOPMENTS.
HINTON

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
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